



# COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS ("STIMULUS CHECKS")

## What is a Stimulus Check?

A Stimulus Check is money that the government will give to individuals and families to help them during the COVID-19 crisis.

What do I need to do to get a stimulus check?

## How do I get a Stimulus Check?

If you filed a 2018 or 2019 tax return, you do not need to do anything. The IRS will send you the stimulus check.

If you get Social Security Retirement, Social Security Disability Insurance, or Railroad Retirement benefits, you do not need to do anything. The IRS will send you the stimulus check.

## What if I didn't file taxes in 2018 or 2019 and I earned some income from work?

If you are single and your income is higher than \$12,200, you should file your 2019 tax return as soon as possible. If you are married and your income is higher than \$24,400, you should file your 2019 tax return as soon as possible. The deadline to file taxes has been extended to July 15, 2020. But, if you can't file right away, you can still qualify to get your stimulus check through December 2020.

If you have very low-income, but you earned at least \$1 from work, you should think about filing taxes because in addition to getting the stimulus check you may also be eligible for additional money through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

## What if I didn't file taxes in 2018 or 2019 because I am very low-income or I didn't earn any money?

If you are single with an income below \$12,200 or if you are married with an income below \$24,400 you should use this free online form to get a Stimulus Check: <https://www.freefilefillableforms.com/#/fd/EconomicImpactPayment>

## Will the IRS call me to ask me any questions after I file my taxes or fill out the online form?

No! The IRS will not call you to ask for any of your personal information or your bank account. Do not give this information out to anyone who calls you. This is a scam.

How much money will I get?

## How much stimulus money will I get?

You will get \$1,200 if you are single and earn less than \$75,000 before taxes. You will get \$2,400 if you are married and file jointly and earn less than \$150,000. You will get \$1,200 if you file as head of household and earn less than \$112,500.

You will receive a smaller stimulus check or no stimulus money if you earn more than these amounts.

## Will I receive more money if I have children?

You will get \$500 for every child you claim as a dependent, if the child is under 17 and has a social security number. See here about who you may claim as a dependent: <https://www.irs.gov/help/ita/whom-may-i-claim-as-a-dependent>

## How will I get the money?

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The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will deposit the money into the bank account you listed in your 2018 or 2019 tax return, or the special IRS form. If you did not give the IRS a bank account, the IRS will mail you a check to the address you provide.

### How will I get the money if I get SSI benefits?

Anyone who receives SSI, whether or not they file tax returns or fill out the IRS form, will receive \$1,200 by the end of April.

But, if you're on SSI and you have children, you will not receive your child's payment until next year.

If you are on SSI and have children, you can choose to fill out the new tool to get money for you and your children:  
<https://www.freefilefillableforms.com/#/fd/EconomicImpactPayment>

### How will I get the money if I get VA benefits?

The government is trying to figure out the fastest way to automatically get money to individuals who receive VA benefits. The IRS.gov website will have updates but we don't know if they will be able to do this. If you didn't file taxes in 2018 or 2019 and don't want to wait, you can use the new tool: <https://www.freefilefillableforms.com/#/fd/EconomicImpactPayment>

## Am I eligible to get a stimulus check?

### Do I need a social security number to get a check?

Yes. If you file jointly with your spouse, you and your spouse must both have social security numbers.

### Can I apply for my children if I don't have a social security number?

No. If you don't have a social security number you can't apply for a stimulus check for your child. Your adult child may be able to get a Stimulus Check if they have a social security number and will not be a dependent in 2020.

### Can I get a stimulus check if I was claimed as a dependent?

You may get a stimulus check if you will not be claimed as a dependent in 2020. You are not considered a dependent if you earn more than half of your living. See here to learn about whether or not you are a dependent: <https://www.irs.gov/help/ita/whom-may-i-claim-as-a-dependent>.

### I have a family member in jail, are they eligible?

Yes. People living in an institution are able to receive a stimulus check.

## Should I be worried?

### Will I have to pay money back if I make more this year than I did last year?

No.

### Will the Stimulus Check reduce my cash aid, health care or food assistance benefits?

No. If you spend the stimulus money within 12 months it will not affect your CalFresh, SSI, School Meals, Medi-Cal, WIC or Cal-WORKs benefits.

### Will I get less money back from my taxes in 2020 because I get a stimulus check?

No. The stimulus check is a tax credit for 2020 that you will get before filing your taxes for 2020. This will not change your eligibility for other tax credits when you file in 2020.

## How do debts or loans affect my stimulus check?

### **I owe child support. Will they take this out of my check?**

Yes. Your tax credit will be taken for your child support debt and paid to the parent you owe. The payment will reduce the amount you owe for child support.

### **I owe student loans. Will they take this out of my check?**

No.

### **I owe someone money. Will the IRS give my stimulus check to them?**

No. The IRS will not give your stimulus money to someone you owe money to for a debt. The IRS will take money from your check only if you owe child support.

If you were sued in court and a judge has ordered you to pay a person or business, that person or business could take the money from your bank account ("levy it"). If your stimulus check is deposited into your bank account, that person or business could may be able to get some of your stimulus money. You can stop that from happening by asking the IRS to mail the check to you. It might take longer to get your check if it is mailed.

### **What do I do if my Stimulus Check is taken by my bank and I need the money for my rent and food?**

If your stimulus check was taken by a bank levy because you owed money to someone, you can file a court document to get the money back. You will fill out these two forms: (1) Claim of Exemption (form [WG-006](#) ); and, (2) Financial Statement (form [WG-007](#) ).

## What if I need help?

### **Where can I get help with filing my taxes?**

If you made less than \$69,000 in 2019, you can file your taxes for free online at: <https://apps.irs.gov/app/freeFile/>. You can find help in person (after Safe at Home Orders are lifted) at: <https://freetaxprepla.unitedwayla.org/en/>

### **What if they send my Stimulus for just me, but I have a child who lives with me?**

You can go to the IRS website and add a child to your Stimulus Check. They may have to send it separately: <https://www.freefilefillableforms.com/#/fd/EconomicImpactPayment>

### **What if I used a tax preparer in 2018 and 2019 to file my taxes and I don't receive a stimulus check?**

Contact the IRS to find out if your check was sent to your bank account, or to a different bank account connected to the tax preparer. The IRS hotline is 1-800-829-1040. If the IRS says the check was sent or deposited to the wrong bank account, call legal aid for help.



**For Free Legal Help,  
Call (800) 433-6251**



**(213) 487-7211**

**For more information about  
COVID-19 resources, see [here](#).**